

LETTER TO A GENTLEMAN

Detecting the Gangrene of some

ERRORS

Vented at this

TIME.

Mat. 1. 6. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from
him that called you into the Grace of Christ; unto
another Gospel.*

Tim. 2. 17. *And their Word will eat as doth a Canker.*

Tim. 2. 13. *Evil Men and Seducers shall wax worse
and worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

By JAMES HOG Minister of the Gospel at
Carrick.

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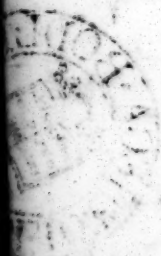
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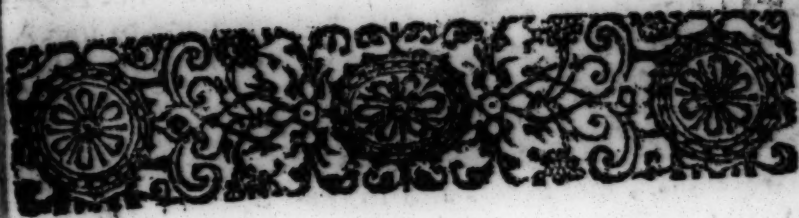
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A LETTER

TO

*A Gentleman detecting the Gangrene of
Some Errors vented at this Time.*

Honoured Sir,

I Remember when we were last together, you were very earnest with me that I would review the Answers of Professor *Simson* to the Libels given in to several Judicatories of this Church by the very Reverend Mr. *Webster* against him. You know I declined that Enterprize upon divers Grounds, which bore, and still have Weight with me, and for which I incline not too closely to account at this Time. That weighty Matter is under the Cognizance of a Committee appointed for that Effect, and the Eyes of many are upon them: Both Friends and Enemies do eagerly await the Decision of this Church

in Matters of such vast Importance; and I am sorry I have it to regret that some little Correspondence I have with Friends in foreign Places, giveth me to understand that the Slackness of this Church from repressing Errors, broached by sundry in it, giveth no small Offence to the Judicious, Learned and Godly in these Countries. It was sometimes our Glory that our Watchmen, and others also in their Station, appeared with Christian Courage and Vigour for every Concern of the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government revealed, and appointed by our Lord Jesus, the glorious Head of his Church. And hence it was that Incroachments upon these came to be taken notice of with so much of Wisdom, Zeal and Care that such Evils were often crushed in the Bud. And in Case of their appearing more openly, the Church it self made it her own Business, and interposed her Authority effectually for pulling up these Roots that bare such Gall and Wormwood. Hereof I might adduce incontestable Instances, could the Bounds of a Missive allow, or were the Thing under any Debate amongst such as know our History. Matters are now otherwise, our Assembly would by no Means be perswaded to make the Affair of Professor *Simson* their Business, and they laid Burdens upon the Reverend Mr. *Webster* for Prosecution of his Libels beyond what, I think, could have been reasonably expected, in an Enterprize which was no personal Affair of his, but a near Concern of the Honour of Christ, and pertained equally, yea and much more to the whole Church. Yet he insisted, and hath been helped hitherto, tho' under such manifold Discouragements, as are like to deter others from necessary Pursuits of this Nature, whatever Errors be taught. Hence, tho' Occasions for such Prosecutions are not wanting, yet none meddleth, for Reasons, which may be easily understood. It's indeed a strange Estate of Matters with us. Upon the one Hand, undeniable Recessions are made from the Form of sound Words, (to speak much within Bounds) and on the other Hand, the necessary

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necessary Endeavours for preserving Purity of Doctrine are so checked, and opposed with so much of Violence, as hath a manifest Tendency to crush all such Enterprizes at their first Appearance, unless such were attacked who are in Circumstances not so favourable as Matters now go. But that I may proceed to the Purpose intended, I think it necessary for avoiding all Mistakes and Inconveniencies, to premise a few Things before I enter upon the Subject.

First, I meddle not with any in Particular, who may be guilty of the Errors I design to enquire into, and shall abstract intirely from the Process depending against Professor *Simson*. It's enough for my Purpose, that the Errors I tax are much talked of, some are tainted therewith, and others are in Danger.

Secondly, Neither do I intend to mention every erroneous Position, about which Debates have been moved these bypast Years, and amongst sundry of our Communion. That were a Task beyond the Limits of a Missive, and not very proper for me to undertake. My Purpose is to condescend only upon a few of these Errors, which are spreading like a poisonous Leaven amongst Persons of sundry Ranks.

Thirdly, Nor is it my Project formally to treat the Controversies: That has been done to our Hand a hundred, and a hundred Times, by renowned and orthodox Divines. Old Errors digged out of their Graves deserve not so much of Notice; and as I incline not to copy out what these great Men have well observed, so I can but add little, if any Thing, to their excellent Labours. The weak Flourishes and little Fair used to adorn Error will easily fall off by a just Representation. In Sum then, my Intention is to unfold the dangerous Gangrene, and to give Warning concerning the infectious Influence of the Plague-sores I meddle with, in Case this private Letter should come under a more extended View. And to insist no longer on Preliminaries, the Heads I am to touch, are,

First,

First, Adam's federal Headship, as representing his whole Posterity in the first Covenant.

Secondly, The State of his Infant-seed, whether born in, or without the visible Church.

Thirdly, The Connexion betwixt an Use of the Means, morally serious, and the Attainment of saving Grace.

Fourthly, The Nature of that ultimate End we ought to propose to our selves.

And Finally, *Fifthly*, I would essay to blow off a little Dust raised for darkening the known, and received Sentiments of sound Divines, and of the Body of exercised Christians, concerning the State of the Damn'd. It is but a Touch which I propose, seeing I am informed, That some eminent Divines are writing at Length upon these, and more of the now controverted Subjects, and it is probable their Performances may be published before my Time, and various Avocations can allow me to go thorow these cursory Notes.

Ere I enter upon the particular Heads, I shall lay down a few general Considerations which relate to them, all in Bulk; and thus our Way will be cleared towards a more close Disquisition.

First, They all are Matters of the greatest Weight, and have a large and mighty Influence upon the whole of Religion, both the Doctrine and Practice of the same, which are either established and confirmed, or undermined and subverted, according to our Sentiments on these Heads, right or wrong. This is manifest, and yet will be further evinced in our Progress.

Secondly, It is equally clear and certain, that they are Purposes of an universal Concernment; they are not Matters which lie somewhat out of the Road of private Christians, and may be problematically disputed amongst the more Learned, nay, the meanest are concerned about them, and ought to be well founded and buckled, yea, distinct and clear in their Sentiments on the Heads.

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These Points are so wreathed in with the Exercise of Religion, that no Person acquainted therewith, can escape to be taken up about them, as will appear manifestly upon a single Review of the Particulars already mentioned.

First, Sure each one of *Adam's* Posterity ought to know, and to be at some Point in what Relation he stands towards this our common Parent; especially for that the Relation of Elect Sinners to the Lord Jesus, the last *Adam*, hath a very great Dependence upon what we hold as to our Relation unto the first. This our worthy Divines have well observed from the Comparisons plainly expressed in the Word, and denoted by the Particles *as* and *so*, *Rom. 5.* from *12.* *1 Cor. 15.* 20, 21. Nor,

Secondly, Is our Concernment less about the State, wherein we make our first Appearance in the World. Sure, whoever they be, that lay to Heart their eternal Salvation, must needs be taken up beyond all Things about their Estate. And hitherto it has been a received Principle amongst these who point Heaven-ward, that we all come (a) into the World in an unregenerated Estate; this is our first State. All whom the Spirit of Christ convinceth of Sin, are brought to see that they (b) believe not in him, that they are Unbelievers, and *he that believeth not is (c) condemned already, the Wrath of God abideth on him.* This State of Condemnation has still been looked upon as our Estate from our Entrance into the World, until the happy Change by a new Creation, whether wrought more early in an Infant-state, in Childhood, or after some Progress of Years; and even the most eminently judicious, learned and godly Parents have always understood Matters so; and their Prayers for, and Heart-concernment about their Children turned still on these Hinges. But if the new Sentiments hold concerning what's ad-

(a) *Psal. 51. 5. John 3. 6.* (b) *John 15. 8, 9.*
 (c) *John 3. 18.*—36.

vanced about the Salvation of all who die Infants, we have been hitherto wholly in the Mist, and the deepest Soul-exercise about these Matters has run upon mere Ignorance and Mistake. Assuredly then the Matter is weighty.

Thirdly, Touching the Connexion betwixt moral Seriousness and saving Grace, if that be certain, we have hitherto cherished many Mistakes about the Way to Glory, and the Difficulties which attend a Pointing that Way. The Attainment of moral Seriousness under a common Influence, is not so great a Matter, nor very rare: And hence the Way to Heaven could not justly be reckoned narrow, contrary to (a) express Scripture. But I enter not, as yet, on the Debate; only it is of great Weight, that we know from what Prospects we are called to use the instituted Means of Grace.

Fourthly, As to the ultimate End, we ought to propose to ourselves, no sober Person will call in Question the great Import of what we determine on that Head, seeing the whole of our Conversation dependeth upon the Views we take of our chief End, whatever it be; and, as it is according to the main End, the Lord himself judgeth concerning the Person; so the just Estimates of him are to be taken by Man accordingly. *If thine Eye be (b) single, thy whole Body shall be full of Light, but if thine Eye be evil, thy whole Body shall be full of Darknes.*

And Finally, *Fifthly*, Forasmuch as, our flying from the Wrath to (c) come, and the Estimation we owe to the Lord Jesus, as our only Deliverer from that Wrath, depend upon the Sentiments we entertain concerning the State of the Damn'd, we may not think light of the present Debates on that Head, nor may we reckon the Question curious, and not necessary to be determined, namely, Whether the Devils and Damn'd do actually

(a) *Matth.* 7. 13, 14. (b) *Matth.* 6. 21, 22.
(c) *1 Thess.* 1. 10.

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sin in Hell, or will sin, after the last Judgment. It is, to all that fear God, a most engaging View of the Lord Jesus, that *he saves (a) his People from their sins*. And the Sin of Hell has hitherto been the Hell of Hell, or the very worst of it, in the Eyes of these, whose Consciences were rightly awakned. But if the new Philosophical Schemes of these Things hold, Christ's Scholars must go to School again; the clearest and sweetest Strains of the Exercise of their Souls about their eternal Estate, as hating and fearing the Sin of Hell more than the Punishment, have been meer Ignorance, Error, and Confusion. And moreover, according to this Opinion, to be saved from Sin is neither so great a Salvation, as we took it to be, nor is it peculiar to the Lord's People; for all the Devils and Damn'd (according to this Divinity) are sinners Creatures, or will be such after the last Judgment. So much for the Import of the Matters debated amongst us in these (b) last and perilous Days. I now go forward to the Particulars, so far as the Design and convenient Bounds of a Missive can allow. And, as to *Adam's* federal Headship, or our first Parents their being not only our natural Heads, as from whose Loins the whole Race of Mankind hath sprung, but that also they are our Heads and Representatives in a Covenant Relation.

I shall premise a few preliminary Remarks before I enter upon that which I chiefly design, viz. a Detection of the Gangrene and infectious Influence of Errors disseminated in that Matter.

First. It's manifest that our *Westminster* Divines own, and assert *Adam's* federal Headship; our Confession designs that Transaction by the express Name of a Covenant, and the Catechisms are clear and full, That the Covenant was made with *Adam*, not only for himself,

(a) *Matth.* 1. 21. (b) 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. and 1 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2.

but for his Posterity. The Harmony of other Confessions of reformed Churches in this Matter, might also be instructed, were that my Business; but waving Purposes of that Nature, I represent

Secondly, That, beyond all Doubt, these eminent Divines understand by the Term *Covenant*, such a Covenant as can have Place betwixt God and Man. No Person that fears the Lord, and hath any Regard for the Things of God, will ever entertain any Thought of setting that sacred, solemn, and high Transaction upon the same Level with Covenants meerly humane; and hence, it's but a vain Attempt to seek Shelter from the Charge of Error, upon such a pitiful, and weak Pretext.

Thirdly, Nevertheless, the Covenant ceaseth not, upon that Head, to be a Covenant in the true and proper Sense of the Word, but in a Way spitting the Divine Glory, and competent to a Creature which hath its All from its Lord, and is intirely dependent upon him. Here we have (so understood),

First, The Parties contracting, our Sovereign Lord upon the one Hand, and our first Parents with their Posterity on the other.

Secondly, We have the Law of the Covenant written in the Heart, excepting that positive Injunction about the forbidden Fruit.

Thirdly, We have the Threatning in Terms express and pointed.

Fourthly, In the Threatning a Promise is contained, which also is expressed particularly, and clearly in the more full Enarration of the Transaction afterward.

Fifthly, That Covenant had also Sacraments agreeable to its Nature. Perfect Immunity from Death, and all Harm whatsoever was signified and sealed by the Use required of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. So long as they kept Covenant with their Lord, and held at a full Distance from every Degree of Breach, their Abstinence from the Fruit of that Tree, sealed their Immunity from all Evil, and the firm Enjoyment of

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of their God, and every good Thing in him, was in like Manner signified and sealed by the Tree of Life, of the Fruit whereof they might have eaten, had they stood, but their Fall secluded them from it: And to all this our first Parents gave full Consent, being created perfect. These Particulars, with the scriptural Proofs, we have in our Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, which are in every one's Hands, and therefore I need not quote the Passages, nor enter upon the Probation of a received Truth, that may be easily found clearly evinced by our Divines against the Adversaries of the Reformation, in their several Systemes, or more particular Treaties. So much for the third Remark.

Fourthly. It's no Prejudice to this, that the solemn Transaction is not particularly called a *Covenant* in the sacred Oracles; for besides, that the Truth of the Exception may be questioned, see *Hosea* 6. 7. *These like Men, or (as the Original and Margin hath it) like Adam, have transgressed my Covenant.* Besides, I say, that the Truth of the Allegiance may be questioned; tho' it were so, and we had not the Name, yet no Handle is afforded hereby for denying the Thing, namely, That the Lord made a Covenant with our first Parents, and with us their Posterity in them. We have not the Word *Trinity*, nor *Incarnation*, nor *Hypostatical Union* nor *Sacraments*, nor *Satisfaction to Justice*, in the whole Bible; but it were a horrible *Stratagem* to deny the Mysteries thereby expressed, upon such weak Accounts, forasmuch as they are fully and largely expressed in other Words; such Pretexis are of too near an Affinity with the long since exploded *Socinian* Quibblings. But, that I may proceed more closely towards the special Design of these Notes, viz. to detect the (a) Canker or contagious Influence of the Error. If it be denied, That this Transaction is properly a *Covenant*, and that it be said to be only a *Law*, tho' fortified with its

(a) 2 Tim. 2. 17.

Sanctions; and if *Adam's* federal Headship be not sincerely owned, divers great and fundamental Truths suffer exceedingly, yea, and seem to be undermined consequentially by this dangerous Error. Some of these I shall condescend upon to make good the Charge.

First, if our first Parents be not our federal Heads, and did not in a Covenant Relation represent us, I see no Ground left for the Imputation of their Sin to us. The Spirit of the Lord's Testimony (a) in the Word is plain, *By one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners*; we all sinned in the first *Adam*. I need not repeat the Arguments of eminent Divines, who have treated these Purposes expressly, nor can I add any Thing to their excellent Observes. It's plain that *Adam* sinned not as a private, but as a publick Person; and hence his Sin is our Sin, we sinned in him; that Sin is justly imputed to us, or reckoned on our Score. The Corruption of our whole Nature proceeds from our Guiltiness of that Sin, and is the just Punishment of our Guilt thereof. These, and other the like Particulars, are of the greatest Weight, as appertaining to the great Fundamentals of Religion, and they necessarily imply our federal Relation to our first Parents. A meer Law will not suffice, nor amount to a sufficient Ground for supporting them. The Posterity of a Traitor, or other Criminal, may indeed suffer by their Parents transgressing the Law; the forfeited Estate, and Honours, cannot in this Case descend to the Posterity, they are born under the Want of them, and come into the World in a mean Estate, without the Dignity and Wealth of their Progenitors: And Parents may also suffer by the Treasons, or other Crimes of their Children, in Case of their subsisting by them, or depending otherwise upon them as to their secular Concerns. But this layeth no Ground for bearing up our

(a) *Gen.* 2. 16, 17. compared with *Rom.* 5. from 12. to 20. and *1 Cor.* 15. 20, 21. *Acts* 17. 26.

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received, weighty and fundamental Doctrine about Man's Fall, original Sin, and the righteous Punishment thereof. In such Events the Sin of the criminal Parent is not the Sin of any of his Posterity; it cannot be said they commit the treasonable Crime in him, and as little can they be reputed to die in him. They suffer indeed, and cannot escape to be the worse of his Treason, for that the Injoyments of which the Parents Treasons do justly deprive him, cannot descend to his Posterity; nevertheless the Treason of the Parents is not, in this Case, properly imputed to the Children. Parents, who, in the like Cases, depend upon their Children for the Necessaries of Life, must suffer in Case of the just Forfeiture of their Children for Treasons, and other capital Crimes; but no Man will say that the Parents, in these Events, do sin in their Children, and die with them, in Case of their being punished as Traitors, or that the Sin of the Children is imputed to the Parents. This Argument I heard proposed by the Reverend Mr. *Webster* in Face of the very Reverend General Assembly.

Secondly, The Gangrene of this Error will manifestly appear, if we further consider the Comparison which the Spirit of the Lord makes between the (a) first and the last *Adam* in the forecited Places of Scripture. This Consideration lieth plain and open to any serious Inquirer, and to evince the Weight of it, I shall essay to represent the following Particulars in a few Words.

First, The first and last *Adam* are both publick Persons, and do, severally, represent these who, in the respective Transactions, are under them, and belong unto them as their Heads and Representatives. The first *Adam* stands, or falls for all his Posterity; and our Lord Jesus the last *Adam* represents, stood for, and purchased Grace, Glory, and every good Thing to all, and each

(a) *Rom.* 5. from *vers.* 12, to 20. *1 Cor.* 15. 20, 21, &c.

of these (a) whom he represented, and for whom he undertook in the eternal Counsel of Peace.

Secondly, With all due Reverence be it spoken, to him, who is the (b) *Brightness of the Father's Glory*, and the express Image of his Person, who is equal to, and one with the Father. They both have their several *Alls*, who all, and each of them are treated, according to the Management of their respective Heads, as having in their Hands (may I so express it) the Stocks, the All of the several Bodies, which they diversly represent. The first *Adam* forfeited the Whole for himself, and all his Posterity. In him we all die according to the express (c) Sanction of the Covenant made with him, and us. And the last *Adam*, that (d) *mighty One, upon whom Help is laid*, according to the eternal Counsel, the last *Adam*, I say, retrieveth these Ruins, and doth as effectually and compleatly save his Elect by Price, and Power, as the first *Adam* (e) ruined all his Posterity, or they destroyed themselves in him: *We all sinned, and (f) came short of the Glory of God*; we failed in our Course, and in the very Entry of it; but the last *Adam* came, according to the eternal Compact, and he both began, carried on, and finished the whole Work in our Vice and Stead: *He builds (g) his Temple, and he only shall bear the Glory*.

Thirdly, If the Covenant of Works was not properly a Covenant, as can have Place betwixt God and Man, but that there is no more in the Dispensation save a Law, as was before mentioned, I think the Error hath a most undermining Influence upon the whole Mystery of Redemption: Hereof I tender the following Particulars by Way of Instance.

(a) *John* 17. 6—9—19, 20. *Zach.* 6. 12, 13. *Isa.* 53. 10, 11. (b) *Heb.* 1. 5. *Phil.* 2. 6. *John* 10. 30. (c) *Gen.* 2. 17. (d) *Psal.* 89. 19. (e) *Hos.* 13. 9. (f) *Rom.* 3. 23. (g) *Zech.* 6. 13.

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First, Our Lord Jesus, as the Head and Representative of all the Elect, satisfied, and merited to the full, by coming up to the utmost Demands of a broken Covenant. But, if no Covenant was made with our first Parents, and us in them; we have been in the Mist ever hitherto, and must fall upon new Methods for unfolding the Covenant of Redemption and Grace. By this Scheme the only Redeemer came not in the Room of Elect Sinners in the Way of a Covenant, but did only obey a violated Law, and gave an Equivalent for the Threatning, which all Divines say struck against us, as well as *Adam*. We must then contrive new, and perverse Glosses for plain Texts which hitherto spoke a quite other Language in the Ears of the whole Body of sound Divines, and the Lord's People throughout the Reformed Churches. (a) *I will give thee for a Covenant to the People. As for me, this is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my Words which I have put in thy Mouth shall not depart from thee, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, &c.* Here the new Divinity would, by necessary Consequence, require us to understand a Law, and no Covenant: And the Passage, *Rom. 5.* from 12. and onward is full and clear for the federal Representation.

Secondly, Hence, as the Denial of *Adam's* federal Headship in the Covenant of Works left no Place for the Imputation of *Adam's* Sin to us, so if our Lord Jesus his Obedience unto the Death was not the fulfilling that Righteousness, which the broken Covenant of Works required, I see not what Room is left for the Imputation of (b) *Christ's* Righteousness to the Elect, and effectually called in Justification. The Imputation of *Adam's* Sin to all his Posterity is built upon his federal Headship, and our Covenant Relation to him, and consequently, if the last *Adam* be not the Elects federal

(a) *Isa. 42. 6.* and *49. 8.* and *59. 21.* compare *53. 10.*

(b) *Jer. 23. 5.* & *Cor. 1. 29, 30,* and *2 Cor. 5. 21.*

Head, as having according to the eternal Counsel, fulfilled that Covenant, which we all broke in our first Parents, I understand not how the last *Adam* can be a federal Head more than the first: And if he be not properly a federal Head, there is no proper Imputation of his Righteousness in Justification.

Thus, *Thirdly*, We are at a Non-entry as to any satisfying Account of that great and fundamental Article, namely the Justification of a Sinner before God, which (as great *Martin Luther* observed) is the Article of a standing or falling Church. And seeing the several Lines of the Lord's gracious Dispensations do here meet, as in a noble Center, I am sorry that I have too good Ground to lament, that these new Schemes, or rather old Errors revived, do not only sadly disturb and confound the known and received Methods of Gospel Grace, but also undermine them, for the utmost I can see, upon the most deliberate and impartial Views.

Fourthly, Tho' all Things in Religion ought to be reduced to the Law and Testimony, and should be squared only according to that perfect Rule, yet in an intire Subordination to the Rule, we ought not to overlook the harmonious Experiences of them who are exercised to Godliness. In these Cases the Spirit of God taketh the Rule in his own Hand, and bringeth the whole Concernments of awakned Sinners to it, as to Nature, Heart and Way, according to his severally instructive, and convincing Workings upon the Heart. This challengeth a becoming (yet still a subordinate) Deference to the Sentiments of such as are most clearly inlightened, and have the most digested Experience of Religion, in its Life and Power. It deserves then a just and serious Consideration in its own Place, that Soul Exercise, in all the Examples of it, I know, or ever have heard of, goeth upon a Chain of Truths quite contrary to this new Theology. The humbled Sinner chargeth himself before God, as guilty of *Adam's* first Sin, and moveth no Doubt about his having broken Cove-

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Covenant with God in him. The Man according to God's own Heart, while deeply afflicted before God for his Sin in the Matter of *Uriah*, pursues his Acknowledgements to the Fountain Head, (a) *Behold I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me;* and others, under the like Influence and Conduct (according to their Measure) are of the same Mind. None of them dream they are under no federal Relation to *Adam*. And their Praises are pleasantly accented, and raised to the higheſt Pitch, upon ſweet Displays of the laſt *Adam*, to whom, as a federal Head, they have their Recourſe by ſaving Faith. I think it not ſtrange that the Abettors of theſe new Opinions ate (to ſpeak much within Bounds) no Friends to the little Flock of exerciſed Perſons, ſeing the Lord's teaching obligeth that ſweet Company to take Matters by a quite other Handle.

So much for the federal Headſhip. I go on to the next Particular, viz. The State wherein we all are born; as Children of the firſt *Adam*. And ſhall,

First, Give an ingenuous Account of the Scheme, on theſe Heads that is now in Vogue with ſome degenerate Sons of this Church.

Secondly, I ſhall eſſay to detect the Gangrene of theſe dangerous Sentiments.

Touching the firſt of theſe, the Chain, upon the neareſt Inquiry I could make, conſiſts of theſe following Particulars.

First, After the fall of Man, the Covenant of Grace was twice revealed, and publiſhed to all Mankind; namely, once to our firſt (b) Parents, while they were yet in Paradife, and again to (c) *Noah*, and his Family, after their Preſervation from the univerſal Deluge.

Secondly, This Covenant of Grace was ſo far made with them all, that all their Poſterity are born in ſuch

(a) *Pſal.* 51. 5. *John* 14. 4. (b) *Gen.* 3. 14, 15.
(c) *Gen.* 9. 8, 9, 10, &c.

an Estate as is connected with Salvation, call it what they will, and do therein remain, until they cast themselves out of it by rejecting that Salvation, which one Way, or another, explictely, or more implictely, is offered to them all.

Thirdly, The Sins of the interveening Parents, and their Apostasy from the Faith, after that the Covenant of Grace was revealed, and published, as afore said; these Sins (say they) cannot prejudice their infant Seed, (who have no Hand in them) and hence all Infants, whether within, or without the visible Church are born in the forementioned Estate, wherein remaining they shall be saved, and as well, after a long Series of intermediate Generations, as if they had immediately descended from these Parents, to whom the Covenant of Grace was published exprelly.

Fourthly, The Infants of Infidel Parents coming into the Power of Christians may be baptized, in Case their Education in the Christian Religion be duly undertaken.

Fifthly, Infants, whether of Christian or Heathenish Parents, dying in Infancy, are probably of the Number of the Elect;—And therefore, we should judge charitably, and hope the best of all these Infants—that they are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, in the same Way, with the Infants of believing Parents.

Sixthly, If God should deny his saving Grace to any Infants dying in Infancy, he would deal more severely with them, than he did with the fallen Angels, which we are not to think he doth, this being a Piece of Severity no where insinuated in Scripture, which, on the contrary declares, that his tender Mercies are over all his Works.

Seventhly, This, with other Things, swayeth the Ballance so far, that it is probable of the whole Race of Mankind, moe are elect and saved, than reprobate and damned. So much for the Scheme, wherein I injure no Person, for these Tenets are owned, and warmly

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warmly maintained by sundry in this Church ; and it were to be wished that the respective Judicatories would make suitable Inquiry. As to what concerns the chief Intent of these Notes, viz. *A Detection of the Gangrene, &c.* I incline not, nor do I think it necessary to examine the divers Errors contained in the just now mentioned Scheme. The large Works of learned Divines, on the several Heads, may be consulted. I intend Brevity, and shall only tender the subsequent Remarks upon the Whole.

First, I cheerfully acknowledge that the Substance of the Gospel was published to our first Parents in (a) Paradise, and quickly after their, and our Fall : Here, I confess, we have the Covenant of Grace very nervously and compleatly in few Words. As to (b) *Noah* and his Family, I cannot discern it so clearly, tho' the Covenant there mentioned secureth the Earth from being any more destroyed by a Flood, and many Ages afterward the (c) Stability of the Gospel Covenant was compared to the Security, which the God of Truth then gave by Oath that the Earth shall be no more covered with Water. But whatever be of that Matter, these Discoveries of Grace will not infer the Lord's having brought their Posterity into a Covenant-state, or an Estate of Favour, call it as you please. The Scriptures know no Head, nor Representative in a Way of Grace and Mercy, save only the last *Adam*, nor do the Reformed Churches acknowledge any other. The first *Adam* was indeed our federal Head, and represented us all, but only in the Covenant of Works. He was indeed a (d) living Soul, but his Life he quickly lost, and so cannot be an invivifying Head : That Glory is peculiar to the last *Adam*, the alone quickening Spirit. That the Lord shewed Mercy to our first Parents, I incline to think, and it is manifest in the Case of *Noah*, who

(a) *Gen.* 3. 14, 15, &c. (b) *Gen.* 9. 8, 9, 10, &c.
 (c) *Isa.* 54. 9. (d) *1 Cor.* 15. 45.

was (a) upright in his Generations, and walked with God. But such Benefits are personal, neither did they, nor doth any godly Parent represent their Posterity in Gospel-covenant and saving Blessings. The Spirit of the Lord's Testimony concerning the Birth of (b) Seth is memorable. *Adam begat a Son in his own Likeness, after his own Image, and called his Name Seth.* Had this been said of Cain, namely, that Adam begat him after his own Image, as that Image is opposed to the Image of God, some might have cavilled; no wonder, considering his great Wickedness: And as to Abel, it appears not that he had any Issue. But it's said of Seth a Father of the Church, from whose Loins the Sons of God sprung, (who were a Society distinct from the wicked Posterity of Cain, until a profane Mixture brought on the Deluge) to shew that no Person is, by his natural Birth, exempted from the Ruins of the broken Covenant of Works. This Foundation then of the new Scheme is naught, and the Superstructure raised upon it must fall to the Ground.

Secondly, Nevertheless godly Parents have Ground to judge charitably, and to hope the best concerning their Children, who die in an Infant Estate, and Infants born within the visible Church, are intitled to Baptism, and other Privileges, which I am not obliged to inquire into as to the present Debate. It sufficeth that they enjoy not these Privileges, as represented either by Adam, or Noah, nor by an universal Covenant of Grace made with them, nor are they common with them to other Infants born of Heathenish Parents, and without the visible Church. The Scriptures, and in a Suitableness to them, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, with these of the other Reformed Churches, are clear on this Head, and teach,

First, That the visible Church consists of all those throughout the World that profess the true Religion, with their Children.

(a) Gen. 6. 9. (b) Gen. 5. 3.

Secondly, That the Ordinances are given to them only, and the known Church Privileges belong to them alone.

Thirdly, That Infants born without the visible Church, and of Parents who profess not the true Faith, may not be baptized.

Fourthly, That out of the visible Church, there is no ordinary Possibility of Salvation. These are our received Principles, which have been largely declared, and evinced from the Scriptures by the whole Body of sound Divines, who have treated these Purposes, and I need not copy what they have excellently written; the Truths speak very plainly for themselves, being clearly and plentifully (a) set down in the Word. I only observe, that by the fore-mentioned Scheme, the ancient Land-marks are removed.

Thirdly, The modest Expressions wherewith it's set off, as for Instance, it's probable that all Infants, dying in Infancy, are saved, &c. It's probable they are of the Number of the Elect, &c. We ought to judge charitably, and to hope the best concerning them, &c. And, in Case any such come into the Power of Christian Parents, they may be baptized, &c. &c. These modest Expressions, I am sorry I must say, are meer Semblances, and a Sort of fair Vehicles of the deadly Poison. Error is modest in its first Approaches, but afterwards it speaks more resolutely, according to the Entertainment it finds. For instructing what I advance, let it be fairly considered, that the Scheme asserts the Birth of all Infants in an Estate, wherein continuing, they shall be saved; and also their Continuance in that Covenant-state until they cast them-

(a) 1 Cor. 1. 12. & 12. 13, &c. Psal. 2. 8. Rev. 7. 9. Rom. 15. from 9. 1 Cor. 7. 14. Acts 2. 39. Ezek. 16. from 20. 1 Cor. 12. from 28. Eph. 4. from 11. Mat. 28. from 19. Isa. 59. 21. See more in our Confession, Chap. 25.

selves out of it. Now I must say, that this inferreth a Train of Consequences, which amount to what I have advanced; and for a further Detection of the Gangrene, I select, of many, these following.

First, If all Infants be born in a Covenant-state, or an Estate of Favour, as was mentioned, then it is not merely probable, but certain that dying in their Infant Estate, they are saved; for if any of them, dying Infants, should miss Salvation, it would necessarily follow, That one might live and die in the Covenant of Grace, or in a State of Mercy, and be guilty of nothing to cast him out of that Estate, and yet perish at last.

A Covenant Security must then be very weak according to this Scheme.

Secondly, Not only may they, but they ought to be baptized, so soon as they can be brought under the Power of Christians; and, according to this Scheme, all the Infants of Infidel Parents, as Access may be had to them, should be baptized, and their Education, so far as is possible, should be undertaken for; but tho' there were none to undertake for it, what if one should say, that in this Case, there is no Reason for withholding the Seal from them, seeing they are in the Covenant? They may die in their Infancy, and so be saved; and as to their Education, it is presumable, that the same gracious Lord, who has already brought them into Covenant with himself, as the Scheme bears, will find Ways for it, and it may be left on him, in Case none could be found to undertake. But this I only propose.

Thirdly, I can more positively assert, that this Opinion rendereth all the Privileges of Infants born within the visible Church, utterly void. Here, they are all set upon the same Level, whether they be born within, or without the Church, whether of godly, or ungodly Parents, whether under the old, or new Testament Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, there is no Difference, they are all descended of Adam and Noah, and born within the Covenant; sure the Scriptures

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carry this (a) otherwise. The Children born of both, or one believing Parent, are holy, according to the Spirit of the Lord's express Testimony, otherwise they are unclean. *The Promise* (saith the Lord) *is unto you, and to your Children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call.* The Lord designeth them his Children, who are born within the visible Church, in Opposition to these who are born without it, such Privileges then are not common.

Fourthly, According to this Scheme, I see not what Reason Parents, of any Sort, have to desire the Life, or bewail the Death of their Infant Children, for if they die Infants, they are saved, but in Case of their living beyond that Age, their Salvation is at best very uncertain; and sure even common Sense would say that a Certainty, and in so great a Matter, is to be preferred to an Uncertainty. Every wise and good Man would take the Measure so in his own Case, and assuredly the like loving Concernment were due from him to his Infants, who come forth from his Loins, and are Parts of himself. Many other absurd Consequences, as Appendices of this last, might be mentioned, but I wave them.

Fifthly, This new Divinity would carry us over to the Camp of the *Arminians*, as having a most unfriendly Aspect on the Perseverance of the Saints; for according to it, many who yet are within the Bond of the Covenant of Grace, or in a State of Favour, which I think is the same Thing, do notwithstanding fall away totally and finally; all Infants (according to this new Scheme) are once in Covenant, or in a State of Salvation, which is equivalent, for no Salvation proceeds from the Covenant of Works, but that many Thousands of them do apostatize after that they are come to Age, I think no sober Person will doubt.

Sixthly, Touching the Number of the saved, the Error in this is but accessory, being a Consequence of

(a) 1 Cor. 7. 14. Acts 2. 39. Ezek. 16. from 20, &c.
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the chief one, concerning the State wherein *Adam's* Posterity are said to be born, and also of others more principal, which belong to the Scheme: For if all who die Infants, both within and without the Church, are saved, a great Deal are added to the Number. The Testimonies of the Spirit of Truth in the Word are clear and full in the Matter, and do clearly instruct, that the saved are few. Eminent Divines have gathered, and set them down in their Systemes, and other Writings, and they are well summ'd up in a Print lately emitted for detecting some of *Professor Simson's* Errors. A vast Deal of the World is covered with the grossest heathenish Darkeness, and abominable Wickedness, in Worship, and Way, and much of the rest is drenched in fundamental Errors, gross Idolatry, and other detestable Works of the Flesh, few profess pure Truth even in Fundamentals, and of these, who can tell, how many are utterly ignorant of the very first Principles, or openly profane, and scandalously wicked to their last. And if (as we must) we also detract from the Number of those who have only a meer (a) Form, and die (b) Hypocrites, more gross or subtil, the Number will be exceedingly diminished: It's a new, and strange Language in the Churches of Christ; and it cannot escape to offend christian and sober Ears to heara Strain of Teaching set out under the Shew of sublime Wisdom, and yet so patly contradicting the plain Letter of the Word, and without any Shadow of Scriptural Grounds adduced to instruct it, namely, That the Number of the saved is comparatively great, probably equal to, or greater than that of the Damn'd, That they are absolutely, and in themselves a (c) great Number, known only to God, and which none can tell, who of sound Divines ever doubted? The Word is full, and pointed. (d) *Strait is the Gate,*

(a) *Rom.* 2. 17, 18, 19, 20. (b) *Job* 8. 13. & 27. 8.
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and narrow is the Way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it. Christ's Flock is a (a) little, and (as the Original hath it) a very little Flock. The Righteous are scarcely saved, &c. This the Spirit of Truth fully declares, but the new Divinity dictates a quite contrary Doctrine; Christ's Flock is even comparatively a great Flock, the Number of the saved is great, and equal to, yea more than that of the damn'd; these Scriptures must be understood of the Aged, &c. &c. I enquire who told our wise Men so much? and what scriptural Grounds can they adduce for the Exception? Nay, you must not urge them there, it's from their Altitudes of profound Wisdom that these Oracles proceed. It's necessary the Mercy of the Lord, which is a Divine Attribute as well as his Justice; it's necessary, say they, that this Mercy be glorified as much as his Justice, &c. &c. And that therefore as many, or more, be saved as damned. O stupid and senseless Ignorance! O arrant Folly under the Notion of Wisdom! Doth not every Sin deserve eternal Wrath? and might not the just and holy God have treated fallen Man as he did the fallen Angels? but that of his sovereign and free Love and Mercy he made the Difference. Thus, it had been just with God to have cast us all into Hell; and, seeing it is so, the Ballance swayeth abundantly on the Side of Mercy, which our gracious Lord hath magnified above all his Works; however few they be who are saved, and who shall give us the Rule and Measure of the Lord's glorifying himself? shall we not take his own Testimony upon it? and shall not this end the Controversie? if puny Novices be allowed to forge Exceptions at random, and to coin Articles of Faith at their Pleasure, what shall become of Religion? and what Security can we have for any one Article thereof? We are told forsooth, That the little Flock is to be understood only

(a) Luke 12. 32. 1 Peter 4. 18.

of our Lord's Disciples, and some others present when these Words were spoken, a little Flock indeed, and a very narrow Expolition, but will these Men of Wisdom say, That the Kingdom is also confined to Christ's Disciples, and these others, and that this Text alloweth to no other the Comfort of being Heirs of Glory. I turn the Canon upon our Antagonists, and assert that this Text must be understood of these who, by their heavenly Father's Good-will, shall be brought to Heaven, and they, tho' a little Flock, yet I hope are greater than that of Christ's Disciples, and some others, as aforesaid. Moreover, the whole Context is spoken (a) with one Breath, *fear not, seek ye the Kingdom of God, give Alms, &c. &c.* View more before and after the Words; are all these Things spoken only to Christ's Disciples, and a few others then present? and are the Cautions and Comforts against anxious Carefulness only given to them? Our Lord Jesus said also to his Disciples, *Let not your (b) Hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's House are many Mansions, &c.* Doth this only concern Christ's Disciples? he said likewise to Peter in particular, *I have prayed for (c) thee, that thy Faith fail not*; and may no other intermeddle with that Cordial? Such Divines would prove but sorry Comforters of dejected Believers, and at this Rate a great Deal of the Bible would be deforced off from common Use; such trifling Captions deserve not any serious Notice: Nay, these Things were written for (d) our Learning.

Seventhly, As to what concerns the Offers of Salvation made to all in an explicite or implicite Way, which is a Part of the Scheme, and dictates to us, That Infants, whether born within, or without the Church, continue in such a State, (call it what they will) wherein they shall be eternally saved, if they die en-

(a) Luke 12. 31, 32, &c. (b) John 14. 1, 2
(c) Luke 22. 31, 32. (d) Rom. 15. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 11.

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they cast themselves out of it, by rejecting the offered Salvation: I say, touching what relates to the universal Offers of Salvation, no new Error is broached here. I am loth to repeat the solid Arguments of great Divines against this dangerous Opinion.

First, The Accounts we have in Scripture concerning the State of the Heathens before the Light of the Gospel shined amongst them, are far contrary to this Sentiment at that Time, *they were without Christ, (a) Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without God in the World.* Now, let any sober and unbiassed Person compare this Account with the alledged universal Offers of Salvation, and I could appeal to their own Consciences about the Decision; they are without Christ, without Hope, &c. &c. Yea without God (or Atheists) in the World, and yet Salvation is offered to them all in an implicate Way. I ask, Do not these Offers give Hope? how are they then without Hope? are they without Christ to whom he is offered, tho' implicitly? are they Strangers to the Covenants of Promise, and without God in the World? and yet Salvation is tendered to them all. It were a horrible Perversion of the sacred Text, should it be reconciled either with this Opinion, or the first Chapter of our Confession of Faith. Nothing, I would think can be more contrary.

Secondly, I would fain know how this Salvation is offered to all; assuredly there is no Salvation but thro' Christ; *(b) There is no other Name, under Heaven, given among Men, whereby we must be saved.* Christ then must one Way or other be made known to them, pray who preaches him? the Works of Creation and Providence display not the Gospel Covenant, and no Impressions of that Covenant are left upon the Consciences of Adam's Posterity, for he himself knew it

(a) Eph. 2. 12. (b) Acts 4. 12.

not before his Fall, how then can his Posterity know any Thing of that blessed Contrivance, without special Revelation? had not the Light displaying this great Mystery broke out in Paradise, even the Seraphims could never have known any Thing about it.

Thirdly, The Apostolical Reasoning on this Head, is clear and full, and setteth the whole Matter in much satisfying Evidence. (a) *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? &c. &c.* All issueth here, namely, Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God; and heathenish Nations want the Word, and Hearing, and so are out of the Road of Salvation in any ordinary Way. It is true, the glorious Gospel was carried thorow much of the Earth. *Have (b) they not heard? yes, verily (saith the Lord) their Sound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the Ends of the World,* (Words allusive to the (c) Course of the Sun) But the Candlestick was, by Reason of the Abuse, justly removed from many famous Churches, and heathenish Darkness covered these large Countries.

Eighthly, As to what's alledged, namely, if God should deny his saving Grace to Infants, dying in Infancy, he would deal more severely with them than he did with the fallen Angels, &c. I represent the following Remarks for unvailing the Gangrene.

First, The Testimony of the Spirit of Truth in the Word is plain, and pointed, viz. *By the Disobedience of one, many were made Sinners.* (d) Infants that come into the World guilty of Sin in Adam, and hence there is no Severity in the Lord's dealing, tho' he deny his saving Grace to them. It is only of free Mercy, thro' Christ, that saving Grace is given to one or other; and

(a) Rom. 10. 14, 15. (b) Rom. 10. 18. (c) Psalm 19. 4. (d) Rom. 5. 19.

therefore there can be no Severity in the withholding of it. Is it not (a) *lawful* for the Lord to do with his own what he will? But it would seem the Scheme considereth not Infants as Sinners, and the Truth is, it subverts the very Foundations of the Imputation of Adam's Sin. Where Sin is, there is no Severity, either in denying Grace, or in any other just Punishment, (b) *The Wages of Sin is Death.*

Secondly, Nevertheless there is a notable Difference betwixt the State of fallen Man, and that of fallen Angels: No helping Hand was stretched out for the Relief of these fallen Spirits, tho' made of a Nature higher than that of Man. (c) *The Lord Jesus took not on him the Nature of Angels:* They all are left in their fallen Estate. It's otherwise with Adam's Posterity, even in their Infant Estate, and the (d) Difference is great betwixt them and the fallen Angels, that some, tho' not all, are eternally saved.

Finally, Ninthly, I would gladly know what these Sins are, which cast us out of that happy Estate, wherein the Scheme puts our Birth. If every actual Sin cast us out of that Estate, it must be rather a State of the Covenant of Works, than of Grace. If we continue in that good Estate until we cast our selves out by rejecting the offered Salvation, the Scheme gives heathenish Infants a Preference unto these who are born within the visible Church; for, giving, tho' not granting what the Scheme alledgeth, viz. That the Offers of Salvation are made to all, it must needs be yielded, and the Scheme also acknowledgeth, that these Offers are but dark and implicate, as made to Heathens, and therefore it may be presumed they are not so quickly, nor easily made evident to the Conscience in the Case of Heathens, as in that of these who, being train'd up within the Bosom of the visible Church,

(a) *Matth. 20. 15.* (b) *Rom. 6. 23.* (c) *Heb. 2. 16.*
 (d) *Matth. 19. 13, 14, 15.*

do enjoy these Offers in Ways more clear, full, and manifest to the Conscience, and hence they may be reputed both sooner, and also more heinously guilty of the rejecting them, than they, without the visible Church, who, at least, must be allowed to have them more darkly. Now, no Person can be charged with the Guilt of rejecting Salvation offered, until he know that it is offered; and seeing it is not easy (if possible) according to the Scheme, to determine how, or when the Salvation is offered to Heathens, and therefore many of them die, before they can be reckoned to know, and reject the Salvation offered, whereas all this is clear in the Case of these who are born within the visible Church; it must needs be better with Heathens than with Christians according to the Scheme, for many Heathens die before they can be reputed to have rejected the offered Salvation, and so they are (according to the Scheme) eternally saved, whereas the Sin of (a) neglecting that great Salvation is sooner committed, and therefore the Punishment justly incurred sooner, under a bright Sun-shine of the glorious Gospel. Let this suffice for the second Branch of the Scheme.

I go on to the third, namely, The Connexion betwixt a morally serious Use of the appointed Means, and the Attainment of saving Grace. And, for treating the Purpose shortly and clearly, I shall,

First, Represent in some few Positions what we may, and ought to yield in this Debate, for eviting the Rocks of Error on either Hand.

Secondly, It will be necessary to state fairly the Errors vented in this Matter.

Hereupon, *Thirdly*, I must essay to unvail the eating Canker, or Gangrene, by shewing the dreadful Tendency of these Errors.

And, in the Whole, let our Eyes be towards the Lord, may his (b) Grace be sufficient for us, and may

(a) Heb. 2. 1, 2. John 15. 22. (b) 2 Cor. 12. 9.

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his Strength be perfected in our Weakness. As to the first of these, I tender the following Remarks,

First, Our sovereign Lord did, from all Eternity, by the Decree of Election, (a) set some of *Adam's* Race apart for the Injoyment of everlasting Life.

Secondly, The eternal, and immutable Decree, not only fixeth the End, viz. The Manifestation of sovereign Grace and Mercy in their eternal Salvation, but (b) doth also take in all these Means, in the Use of which, the Lord will effectually carry them to the End of their Hope, the Salvation of their Souls.

Hence, *Thirdly*, Every elect Person is under a special, and tender Care of Providence, which, in many secret and efficacious Ways, so ordereth, and over-ruleth their Purposes, and Motions, and hedgeth them about on all Hands, in such a Manner, that, without their Disposal, and often contrary to their strongest, and most determinate Inclinations, they are led by an unseen Hand, and stated from Time to Time in such Circumstances, wherein the fixed and efficacious Decree breaks forth in a Chain of wise and merciful Providences, which issue at length, into the Time of (c) Love, in which the glorious Gospel shall come unto their Souls, not in *Word* only, but also in (d) *Power*, and thus *Goodness and Mercy* shall follow them all the Days of their Lives, until they be brought, at length, to dwell in the House of the Lord (e) for ever. Serious, and humbling Reflections on the several Strokes of this Conduct afford the Believer many a sweet Feast within the Compass of Time, and the whole shall make some Part of glorious Contemplation in the (f) higher House, when Time shall be no more.

(a) *Eph.* 1. 5, 6. *2 Thess.* 2. 13, 14. (b) *1 Pet.* 1. 2. *Eph.* 1. 4. & 2. 10. *1 Thess.* 5. 9, 10. & 2. 2, 13. *Rom.* 8. 30, &c. &c. (c) *Ezek.* 16. 8. (d) *1 Thess.* 1. 4, 5. (e) *Psal.* 23. 6. (f) *Rev.* 7. 14, 15, 16.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Beyond all Manner of Doubt, there is here a Connexion betwixt the Use of Means, and the Attainment of saving Grace, and in these Ways the elect Person is effectually raised to a State of perfect Blessedness in the full Injoyment of his God for ever: But the Connexion is not founded upon the morally serious Use of these Means so, as to verifie this Position, viz. Whosoever seriously useth the Means, shall attain saving Grace. It's to be resolved intirely into (a) the eternal Decree, and Counsel of Peace about the Salvation of a definite Number of Sinners, and into the Purchase of that Salvation made by the Lord Jesus for them, together with the effectual Application of the purchased Salvation, begun, and carried on to the utmost by the Spirit.

Fifthly, Nevertheless, no Person hath any Handle from hence to (b) except against the Decree and Providence of God about these Matters, so far as all due Incouragement for using these Means is liberally afforded us by a preached Gospel. No Dust can be justly raised from the Decree, Purchase and Conduct, all which do confine that sure Connexion to the Lord's Elect. For the Decree is utterly unknown to us, and to every Creature, and not only is it unknown as to our eternal Estate, but also as to our Interprizes in Time, and therefore, it's no Part of our Rule, nor are we to take our Measures by it. We know not ordinarily what the Lord hath determined concerning the Issues of our secular Business; yet no wise Man suspends his Undertakings upon his being at a Point concerning what shall be the Event: Such Madness would put an intire Stop to the Affairs of the World. Nay, common Sense speaks forth, and the Scriptures declare plainly the Way we should chuse, and which is ordinarily taken

(a) 2 *Thess.* 2. 13. *Rom.* 8. 30, &c. *Isa.* 53. 10. *Zeck.* 6. 12, 13. *John* 10. 27, 28, 29. & 14, 16, 17—26, &c. &c. (b) *Rom.* 9. 19.

in the Business of Men, (a) *In the Morning sow thy Seed, and in the Evening withhold not thine Hand: For thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this, or that, or whether they both shall be alike good. He that observeth the Wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the Clouds shall not reap.* In like Manner, as we know not whom the Lord Jesus in particular represented in the Council of Peace, or Redemption-covenant, so neither do we know particularly whom he represented in his Obedience, Sufferings, and when he offered up himself a Sacrifice to satisfy Divine Justice. These, (b) and other secret Things belong unto the Lord. Upon the whole, as to the Encouragement our gracious Lord hath given towards the Use of instituted Means; I acknowledge the Well is deep, and there are Difficulties in the Matter, worthy the most serious Inquiry of the ablest Divines. I humbly tender the subsequent Positions as safe.

First, The Matter is here upon a Level with these who are out of Christ, whether Elect, or Reprobate, unto one and other is the Word (c) of this Salvation sent. For what concerns the eternal Decree, we must lay that wholly aside, for no Creature knows any Thing about it, until it be revealed; and hence setting it aside, which being wholly unknown, can come under no Consideration in this Matter, they to whom the Gospel is preached, have the same Adventure in the great Business of Salvation. It were most just with the Lord to cast us all into the bottomless Pit, and therefore we have Cause to be very grateful, that we have any Venture for that Life, which we had forfeited utterly. Rebels against rightful Princes amongst Men would think they had great Reason to be thankful, and would have no Shadow for Cavilling in the like Cases. Let us ly, were it to the very last, at the Footstool of that

(a) *Ecc. 11. 4.—6. 2 Sam. 10. 12. (b) Deut. 29. 29. (c) Acts 13. 26.*

Lord, whose tender Mercies are over all his Works. Who (a) knows what a God of infinite Power and Compassion may do!

Secondly, The Lord hath established a firm and indissoluble Connexion betwixt Faith and Salvation. It is an eternal Truth, viz. He that (b) believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. This we ought to believe firmly, and no Person to whom the Gospel is preached, hath any Shadow of Ground to entertain the least Hesitation about it; and it carrieth desirable Encouragement to all.

Thirdly, Every one to whom this glorious Gospel is preached, is commanded, invited, and fully warranted to receive the offered Salvation. The Lord Jesus (c) stretcheth out his Hands all Day to a disobedient and gainsaying People; and, as (d) Cyrus of old, proclaimed free and full Liberty unto all the captive Jews to go out of Babel; so the glad Tidings of Salvation bear, That we may, and ought to abandon all our other Lords and Lovers, and freely accept the Lord Jesus, as made of God unto us (e) Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and compleat Redemption.

Fourthly, We must indeed acknowledge that only omnipotent Power, in a Way of sovereign Grace and rich Mercy, can determine the self-destroying Sinner to flee to the only Redeemer; yet no Person hath any Handle from thence to complain, seeing equal Warrant and Access are given to all in a Gospel Dispensation, tho' yet the determining Choice be only the Effect of special and irresistible Grace. I know, proud Nature will cavil, Why doth he (f) yet find Fault? for who hath resisted his Will? But, as this Objection strikes plainly at the Apostolical Doctrine, which is ours in the Mat-

(a) 2 Chron. 33. 11, 12, 13. Acts 2. 37. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Eccl. Eccl. (b) Mark 16. 16. (c) Isa. 65. 2. Rom. 10. 21. (d) Ezra 1. 2, 3, 4. (e) 1 Cor. 1. 29, 30. (f) Rom. 9. 19.

ter ; so we rest fully satisfied with the Apostles Answer, Nay, (a) but O Man, who art thou that repliest against God? &c. In the mean while (to use a familiar Comparifon) if Bank-notes were scattered amongst poor and naked Persons, who yet would not so much as take them up, who would not blame themselves for their continued Poverty, seing a taking up the Notes dispersed amongst them, would entitle them to the Sums contain'd? the Application is easie. So much for the first Branch, viz. what we may, and ought to yield in this Debate. For the other two, namely, a stating the Errors, and detecting the Gangrene, I shall, for gaining Time, blend them together. There are two special Errors broached at this Time, which I would take under Consideration.

First, It is asserted, That if the Heathen would use rightly the Light of Nature, the Lord would reveal unto them Christ, and the Way of Salvation thorow him.

Secondly, It's also avouched, That they who use the instituted Means in a Way morally serious, shall attain saving Grace. Now for detecting the Falshood, and displaying the Gangrene of these Opinions, I tender the following Remarks.

First, I can perceive nothing new in them, to me they appear to be old Errors of *Pelagians*, just revived, without any Improvement ; and seing they have been many Times refuted, and exploded by the reformed Churches, I need not resume the Debate ; only I observe,

Secondly, That the Way of Salvation therein taught, is plainly by the Covenant of Works ; Let Persons do what in them lieth, according to the old *Pelagian* Cant, and the Lord will do the rest, &c. He will give Grace, &c. And the Stretch is prodigiously great in a reformed

(a) Verse 20.

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Church, when such pretended Encouragements are extended to the very Heathens.

Thirdly, The continued Tenor of the Scriptures carrieth the Matter a quite contrary Way. While out of Christ, we are (a) *darkned in the Understanding*, and *alienated from the Life of God*, through the Ignorance that is in us; without Faith it is impossible to please God, &c. and *whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin*, &c. Yea, and so pointed is the Account, beyond what Seraphims themselves could have contrived, that we are declared in the Word to be, not only darkned in the Understanding, but *Darkness it self*, not only *Enemies in our Minds by wicked Works*, but even *Enmity it self*, a Compound of Darknels and Enmity, and in a State of meer Death in Spirituals. Now, after all this, to assert a sure Connexion betwixt a Sort of Seriousness that is sometimes found in the ~~heart~~ of Men for a while, and saving Grace is an Indication of such Blindness, as I cannot characterize.

Fourthly, I confess moral Seriousness is desirable in it self; yet I cannot ascribe it to corrupt Nature, it is a Gift of God, and made useful by him in its own Sphere: Nevertheless it is so far from being necessarily connected with Salvation, that Attainments of a higher Pitch come short both of Grace and Glory. I incline not to repeat the known Doctrine of sound Divines on these Heads. Every private Christian knows, that they may be inlightned and taste the good Word (b) of God, and the Powers of the World to come, &c. who yet fall away so, that there's no renewing them again unto Repentance. The Spirit of God declares in express Terms, That the Things which accompany Salvation, are better Things. What more could be desired to determine this Matter? These mentioned, are

(a) Eph. 4. 18. & 5. 8. Col. 1. 21. Heb. 11. 6. Rom. 14. 23. & 8. 7. &c. (b) Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6,—9. 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3, &c.

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not the Things which accompany Salvation; but the Things which accompany Salvation, are other, and better Things.

Fifthly, I freely acknowledge the Goodness, and Mercy of our gracious Lord in vouchsafing on us abundant Incouragement to (a) wait upon him, and the Commands or Exhortations are full of Mercy, viz. (b) *Ask, and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, &c.* Hence, beyond all Manner of Doubt, however we be stated, all of us, yea even the most wicked, ought to be (c) aiming at these Duties continually. Nevertheless, being, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*, and *whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*, we may not think any asking, or seeking hath a sure Connexion with Salvation, save the (d) asking in Faith, which is of a Nature quite different from moral Seriousness.

It is excepted that the Command encourageth an asking the very first Grace; the Exhortation being given to all promiscuously, and therefore must needs imply a necessary Connexion betwixt the morally serious asking and receiving of these who are yet intirely destitute of saving Grace. I answer, *First*, The Exception and the Argument therein implied, prove too much, and hence can conclude nothing. For it is evident that many ask seriously, who yet fall off and never obtain (e), many will seek to enter in at the strait Gate, who yet shall not be able. *Secondly*, Take the Words in the plain Meaning, and the Nature of the Connexion will be manifest, namely, *Ask in Faith, seek, knock*, but still in Faith, and ye shall receive, ye shall find, and it shall be opened to you. But you will say that these Commands or Exhortations are given to the Multitude, and to us all, and incourage those who have no Grace nor

(a) *Psal.* 27. 14. & 31. 24. & 130. 5. *Joel* 2. 12, 13
14. *John* 3. 9. (b) *Matth.* 7. 7. (c) *2 Chron.* 15. 2
(d) *Luke* 11. 9. *James* 4. 3. (e) *Luke* 13. 24. *Psal.* 78
34, 35, 36, 37.

Faith, yet to ask the same, and therefore must imply the sure Connexion alledged. But besides what I mentioned before; I rejoin, *First*, Be it so, and I think it is so, yet the Obligation lieth indispenfibly upon all to believe, and to ask in Faith, and hence there is nothing ftrange in it that they are commanded to do fo. *Secondly*, Thefe Commands, when blessed, carry Life and Strength with them. This our Lord commanded the (a) Man, who had the withered Hand to fretch it out, and with the Word an inlivening Power went forth, and he was inabled. *Lazarus* was commanded to come forth out of the Grave, and he came forth accordingly; the Dead hear the Voice of the Son of God; and they that hear fhall live, *John* 5. 26. *Thirdly*, Though they who are in a State of corrupt Nature can ask in no other Way, but that which is natural and corrupt, yet it were an iniquous Imputation upon the Holinefs of our Lord to fay he commands them to ask in that natural, selfish and corrupt Way. *Fourthly*, If after all, it fhall be urged that Perfons in a natural State have Incouragement to expect faving Grace upon their asking it, let it be further confidered, That the asking required by the Lord proceeds from hungering and thirfting Defires, which are both Duty on our Part, and a Work of the Spirit of Grace with Power upon the Soul, and, in this Cafe, we have no Ground to doubt but that fuch Askers fhall receive. (b) *Our Lord fills the hungry with good Things, but the rich he fendeth empty away.* (c) *Blessed are they that hunger and thirft after Righteoufnefs,* otherwise, as a Sort of asking without that Senfe of Need, is not that asking which the Lord requireth, tho' it were morally ferious, fo Scripture and Experience abundantly fhew that fuch asking is far from having a certain Connexion with Salvation. If it be urged, That *Faith* cannot be fought in Faith, feing the seeking in Faith

(a) *Mark* 3. 5. (b) *Luke* 1. 53. (c) *Matth.* 5. 6.

presupposeth our having it already. I answer, That I see not any Difficulty in asserting, That somewhat of Faith is wrought initially in the very asking, when the Command comes with Power, and more is given as the Return of Prayer, *Mark* 9. 23, 24. *John* 9. from 35. here the Connexion is betwixt the Beginning, and Advances of a saving Work of Grace.

sixthly, I know that a Covering for this Error is sought, by resolving the Connexion into the eternal Decree, and, so understood, there is nothing said beyond what any private Christian knows; who doubts but that in this Sense there is a sure Connexion betwixt the several Links in the whole Chain of Providence towards the Elect, and such as shall issue into Grace, and proceed from one Degree thereof into another until a glorious State do crown the Work (a). But the Fallacy lieth in this, namely, they take the Decree not in the received Orthodox Meaning, but in a *Pelagian* Sense, which makes the discriminating Stroke to be in the Hand of the wretched Sinner, contrary to the joint and harmonious Suffrage of all the Reformed Churches, viz. The Decree, as they understand it, placeth the Sinner in favourable Circumstances; and amidst a Train of Motives which he taketh by the right Handle and accordingly resolves upon such a Course of Seriousness as brings him over into a gracious Estate by a good Use of his natural Powers. Thus the wretched Sinner casts the Ballance, and makes himself to differ from others. So much for the third Branch of the Scheme, I go on to the fourth, viz. The ultimate End we ought to propose to our selves. The new Divinity makes this chief End to be the Happiness of Man and not the Glory of God, as the received Sentiments of Orthodox Divines, and of the Protestant Churches had carried it hitherto.

In treating this Purpose so far as the Design of these Notes can allow, I proceed in the usual Method,

(a) 1 Cor. 4. 7.

First, I shall endeavour to explain the Head a little, and to remove Mistakes by setting down a few Positions. *Secondly*, it will be proper to essay some Discovery of the Gangrene of Error in the Matter.

Touching the first Point I represent, *First*, However it were righteous with God to turn us all into Hell, Death, in its full Compass, being the just Demerit (a) of every Sin, and so much is acknowledged by the humbled Sinner, and implied in (b) stopping of his Mouth; yet it were horrible Impiety to intertain the least Indifference about this great Matter. (c) *Do unto us* (said humbled Israel of old) *as seemeth good unto thee*; whatever Stroke be inflicted, all is just and and thoroughly deserved; yet this hindereth not in the least, but qualifyeth the most earnest Desires of Deliverance, which ought to proceed from the Bottom of our Hearts, *Only save us this Day*. It impedeth not but really hightneth just Earnestness, that Deliverances, of whatsoever Kind, for Time, and Eternity, be humbly implored in the Name of Christ, as (d) Gifts altogether free. It is then a most wicked and impudent Asperion, to class such as are exercised to Godliness amongst the impious Herd of the *Myficks*, and to alledge against honest Ministers that they teach it as a Branch of Self-denial, viz. That we ought to be denied to our own Salvation. *Secondly*, Tho' our proposing the Honour of God to our selves as our ultimate End, cannot be severed from our eternal Salvation; and therefore it is a certain Truth, that whoever they be that thro' Grace, point at the Glory of God as their chief End, shall undoubtedly attain Salvation; yet there is so much of Difference betwixt them, that they can and do admit distinct Considerations: And in the Exercise of the Mind about them the Ballance swayeth variously, sometimes the one, and sometimes the

(a) *Rom.* 6. 23. (b) *Rom.* 3. 19. (c) *Judg.* 10. 11.
(d) *Mic.* 7. 7, 8, 9. *Lam.* 3. from 24.

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Rom. 9. 2

other Way. After the first Awakenings the alarm'd Sinner hath scarce any Thing else in the Eye but Salvation. (a) *Men and Brethren what shall we do? Sirs what shall I do to be saved, &c.* Nevertheless, when that great Strait is happily issued and Difficulties about the eternal State are removed, the Balance turneth on the Side of the Glory of God, and they who are exercised to Godliness know, that in sundry Periods of a Christian Life the Honour of God is so much endeared to the believing Soul, that, for some Time all Considerations of his own Happiness are out of View, and a tender Regard to the Glory of God even filleth the Soul. Thus it was with (b) *Moses and Paul*, in their high and heroical Wishes or Prayers; and Believers of an ordinary Size have some Experience of this blessed Temper of Spirit, tho' in a lower Measure. It's also to be peculiarly remarked, that amidst the greatest Depths of Soul Trouble, and also when the gracious Person has almost utterly lost all Hopes of a comfortable Issue of his Distresses either in Time or beyond it, and hath concluded it almost peremptorly that he shall be eternally destroyed from the Presence of the Lord and the Glory of his Power. Yet even in such deep Plunges, when he cannot attain the least comfortable Prospect of Happiness, nevertheless his Regards to the Honour of God are strong. Of this I represent these two incontestable Evidences, *First*, In these Straits, setting aside some more violent Paroxysms of Temptation, the Strain and Tenor of their Walk is circumspect and tender, they dare not offend; for the most Part, they both think and speak honourably of the Lord, and what they may have spoken in their Haste, through the Violence of Temptation, they are even racked, and as out of Joint, till they get it retracted. (c) *If I say I will speak thus, behold I should offend against the Generation of thy Children.*

(a) *Acts* 2. 37. & 16. 30. (b) *Exod.* 32. 31, 32. *Rom.* 9. 2. (c) *Psal.* 73. compare v. 15. with 19.

Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in Anger shut up his tender Mercies. (a) And I said, This is my Infirmary, &c. When he taketh the tossed (b) Creature by the Neck and shaketh him to Pieces, when he setteth him up for his Mark, when he puts his Feet upon his Neck, (shall I so express it) yet fain would he turn and kiss these blessed Feet. I will bear the (c) Indignation of the Lord, &c. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, he putteth his Mouth in the Dust, &c. I waited patiently for the Lord, &c. More to this Purpose may be viewed in the sacred Oracles. Surely the Ballance swayeth chiefly towards the Glory of God in such Cases. Secondly, Sundry Instances of blessed Martyrs we have had, who, amidst the thickest Crowds of Soul-terrors, and under the strongest Fears of eternal Wrath, have notwithstanding witnessed a good Confession, and proven faithful unto the Death. It's true the Lord pitied them, and dispelled these heavy Clouds, but sometimes their Relief has been delayed almost to the very last; yet, even in the darkest Hour, this preponderating Regard to the Honour of God has shined forth. In these Cases that Mind (d) appeared to some Degree, in such Worthies which was also in Christ Jesus, who, in the Depths of his Soul-trouble, centered in this, namely, (e) *Father glorify thy Name*. Such a prevailing Respect to the Divine Glory, has been found in poor sinful Creatures, and what Character is due to the new Divinity, which denies it to the Lord Jesus himself, I leave to any sober Person to determine. So much for the second Remark.

Thirdly, It is evident from the Premises, that tho' the Salvation of all that point at the Glory of God as their great End be undoubtedly secured, yet there is so much of Difference betwixt the two, viz. The Lord's declarative Glory, and the Happiness of Man, so much of

(a) *Psal.* 77. 7, 8, 9, 10, &c. (b) *Job* 16. 12, 13, &c.
 (c) *Mic.* 7. 7, 8, 9. *Lam.* 3. 28, 29. *Psal.* 40. 1, 2, &c.
 (d) *Phil.* 2. 5. (e) *John* 12. 28.

Distinction, I say, as gives sufficient Ground for a distinct Consideration: It's also manifest that sometimes the one, sometimes the other is chiefly in the Eye of the exercised Soul, and that sometimes a Regard to the Honour of God doth not only sway the Ballance with him, but is almost his whole Business, hence the Question in this Debate devolveth into a narrow, yet a very clear Point, viz. Which of the two as to Matter of Duty should be chiefly eyed as the End, and ought chiefly to sway the Christian as the principal Motive: And I must say it is strange that a Thing so manifest should admit of the least Debate in a Reformed Church. The Regard we owe to the Lord Jesus as our (a) *Alpha*, and *Omega*, should, at least, so far prevail with us as to allow his Honour the principal Consideration, seeing our Salvation is, in that very Way, secured beyond all Danger. So much for Explication of the Head and removing Mistakes; I proceed now,

Secondly, To detect the Gangrene of Error in this weighty Matter; And, *First*, The Preference which this strange Opinion gives to our Salvation, setting it upon an high Pinacle above the Glory of God, has a most ruinous Influence upon the whole Exercise of Religion. It poisons the (b) Spring from whence the several Streams of a Godly Conversation should issue, seeing the ultimate End, which also is the chief Motive, must needs have an universal Influence upon the whole Conversation: And forasmuch as subtilized Self is here taught, the whole of the Conversation must be accordingly *selfish* (c). Now we are even doctrinally taught to go deeper, and still deeper into Self, and the Lord Jesus with the whole Cloud of Witnesses are set forth as our Pattern herein. O the dreadful Height of Blindness which thus perverteth the Scriptures! Here is a strange Practice of Piety, namely, let the Consideration of Self as to

(a) Rom. 11. 36. Rev. 1. 8. (b) Matth. 6. 21, 22, 23, &c. (c) Matth. 16. 24. & 10. 10, Mark 8. 34.

Happiness still have the Preference in the Competition, and let the Honour of God vail to it as the higher End, and this must run thro' the whole Conversation. Ah, what a sad Walk must this make in all the Concerns of Religion! when the first Mover is so very far wrong, nothing can move aright in the whole Fabrick. *Secondly*, As this selfish Divinity undermines Sanctification from first to last, so it no less subverts the Believers Comfort. They who fight under Christ's Banner know, that, amidst the Crowds of Enemies, the Believer can, at best, but rarely well see the Tendency of great and sore Troubles towards his Good. He is then inclos'd on all Hands with the dark Parts of the Cloud; yet amidst the most involved Intricacies of his Distress, Faith's View is refreshing, namely, the great End is secured. (a) *The Lord hath made all Things for himself*: He will raise a Revenue of Glory to his Name out of all these Troubles. Here he centers sweetly as in the great and ultimate End. *The Lord cannot deny* (b) *himself*, he will not give his Glory to another; and seeing he will glorify his Name in a Way of Mercy towards his Children, the Inference is (c) sure and sweet, that the poorest Weaklings who belong to him shall not sink *beneath the Stream*: The Head is above Water, none of the Members can be drowned. Here is a Thread by which the exercised Soul is gradually led out from the thickest Labyrinths or Wildernesses of Temptations, and Troubles, but the new Divinity carrieth us another Way, and quite off from these Methods of Gospel Grace and Comfort. So much for the fourth Branch of the Scheme.

Now it remains that I subjoin some Remarks about the State of the damn'd. I shall say but little at the Time. That which seemeth to be mainly straitning, and to give the fairest Colour to the strange Divinity upon

(a) *Prov.* 16. 4. (b) *Isa.* 42. 8. *2 Tim.* 2. 13. (c) *Rom.* 16. 20. *Phil.* 1. 6. *Psal.* 138. 8, &c.

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the Head, is that the Scriptures are alledged to be silent about the Sins of the damn'd, whereas their Sufferings are narrated fully and clearly. This pretended Silence, or at best an alledged scanty Measure in the Account of their Sinfulness, has given some Umbrage to desirable Persons, who notwithstanding are very sound in that, and other Matters. For dispelling Mists as to this Debate, I tender a few further Remarks, whereby I shall endeavour to evince, That the Spirit of the Lord in the Scripture is not sparing, but plentiful in declaring, That the State of the damned is a State of Sin, and that they sin actually in Hell.

First, It is beyond all Manner of Doubt that a State of spiritual Death is a sinful State. It were but superfluous Labour to instruct this; no Person moves any Doubt about it, and it is also beyond Controversy, that spiritual Death is at its Height in Hell, and especially after the last Judgment: The Reasoning, I would think, is very plain. Are all, out of Christ (1), dead in Trespasses and Sins, while yet in Time and upon Earth? They're certainly much more so beyond Time and in Hell, and seeing the Reign of Corruption, with its mighty Stirrings in Thought, Word and Deed, are the Strength of spiritual Death while we are upon Earth, it were a strange Perversion of Scripture to understand all this and Death it self in a diminutive Sense, when applied to Hell, viz. So as intirely to exclude the very worst, even the sinful Part, and actual sinning from the State of the damn'd. This strange Opinion makes the second Death far preferable to the first, because it makes that State intirely sinless as to actual Sin, far contrair to the Word of God, which plainly declares the second Death to be the worst.

Secondly, It is the special Part, or rather the comprehensive Summary of the Sinfulness and Misery of a

(1) *Eph.* 2. 1, 2. *Tit.* 3. 3, 4, 5. *Gal.* 5. 19, 20. *Rev.* 2. 11, & 20. 6, & 21. 3.

corrupt natural Estate, namely, to be (a) *without God in the World*. This is as it were the Sum total of all the Particulars, and the humbled Soul bemoans, especially the sinful Part and actual sinning as chiefly implied herein, and forasmuch as the Devils and damn'd are without God with a Witness, especially after the last Judgment: Hence their being without God in Hell, must chiefly denote the Sinfulness of that State. It were a most inaccountable Perversion of plain Words, to say, That a State of Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, &c. is a State altogether free of Sin, and of sinning actually.

Thirdly, A natural Estate in Time is acknowledged to be an Estate so sinful, that all who are in that Estate can act in no other Way but sinfully; (b) *An evil Tree can bring forth no good Fruit. The plowing of the Wicked is Sin, and his Sacrifice is an Abomination*. Shall we think the Trees that were bad upon Earth, become good in Hell? Are they who upon Earth were a Mass and Compound of Darkness and Enmity, so far better'd by the Torments of Hell, as to become sinless there. Such were happy Torments indeed. What Colour can be put upon such an absurd and senseless Error! Sure the Pains of Hell unhinge not the humane Nature. They know they are condemned to that Estate, and that the Sentence is just, and they reflect bitterly against themselves, &c. All this is acknowledged by the Abettors of the Error, and hence their State is not merely passive. They are not deprived of Reason by the dreadful Impression of the righteous Sentence, and the Stings of an awakened Conscience pierce so much the deeper. They have the same corrupt Nature in Hell which they had on Earth, and sure that Nature acts but not sinfully by the new Divinity. I would think then that the highest Pitches of Holiness take Place in Hell, while amidst

(a) *Eph. 2. 12. Ezek. 16. 4, 5, 6, &c. 2 Theß. 1. 8. Matth. 25. 41.* (b) *Matth. 7. 17. Prov. 21. 7. and 28. 29. Heb. 11. 6.*

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the Height of eternal Torments, not one unseemly Thought of God, nor the least Degree of Murmuring take Place: For sure these are actual Sins, such Opinions confound all Religion, and would render the Devils and damn'd the most eminent Saints.

Fourthly, The State of Darknes in Time has still been owned to be not only a sinful State, and that the Motions of a Mind under the Reign of Darknes were full of Sin, but also they who understand Matters of that Sort, have still acknowledged the chief Strengths of Sin to lie in the (a) Darknes of the Mind, which is the main Source of the Enmity thereof: Sure then, when Darknes and Enmity are at their Height in Hell, all that proceeds from such a Spring must be poisoned with Sin. What else can it be but all Wickedness! Strange Divinity, that a State of Darknes in Time should be all Sin, and yet a State of utter Darknes in Hell must be sinless or free of actual Sin!

Fifthly, If it be found that the Torments of Devils and the other damn'd as suffered by them have Sin wreathed in with their very Nature, then the Foundations of this strange Opinion will be found naught, and so the whole Fabrick must fall, seeing, in such a Case, the Sin and Punishment must needs be inseparable. As to this I tender two Remarks, *First*, The Spirit of God in the Scriptures assigneth it to the Lord Jesus Christ as one of the Glories peculiar to him, namely, that from first to last he (b) suffered without sinning. Hence it is plain from the Word, that this Dignity is not communicated to the choicest of Creatures, and far less can it have Place in Hell. I enlarged this in some Missives upon the Head, which some Time or other may see the Light, and shall no further deduce it at the Time. *Secondly*, I presume the damn'd know the State into which they have

(a) *Eph.* 4. 18, 19. & 5. 8. *John* 16. 3. (b) *1 Pet.* 2. 21, 22. *1 Jn.* 5. 3. p. 1.

brought [themselves, and so much is granted by our Antagonists. It's own'd also that their Corruptions are at the Height and in their full Strength: And moreover, beyond all Doubt, their Torments are extreme, hopeless, and eternal. Upon all this I subsume, That Replying against God, Rage, and Irritation must necessarily attend these Sufferings in rational and highly corrupt Creatures, or else, as was before mentioned, a Pitch of Holiness is ascribed to them so high, as to want a Parallel. That our Lord Jesus repined not under his suffering pure Wrath may well be understood, because he had no Sin, nor could sin, but that the Devil, and damn'd, in the full Height of their Wickedness exert not, through all Eternity, so much as the least Degree of a murmuring Thought, nor any actual Sin, tho' conscious to themselves of what they suffer, and full of bitter Reflections against themselves for having brought themselves into that State and Place, as our Antagonists yield. I say, to assert that all these Torments in rational Creatures shall not throughout all Eternity have so much as one wrong Thought attending them, is an Error so absurd, sottish, and palpable, that I am astonish'd at the Blindness from which it proceeds. Especially after repeated Declarations in the Word, that Hell is a State and Place of *weeping and gnashing of Teeth*, that is, in the plain and obvious Meaning of the Words, a State and Place of eternal Sorrows, not pure and without repining, but accompanied with eternal Rage and Rancour, clearly and familiarly expressed by (a) gnashing of the Teeth; an Expression which usually in the Word, and in the Use of Men, denoteth Malice, Rage and Indignation. Assuredly then the Scripture is not silent concerning the sinning of the damn'd. Here the Go

(a) *Matth.* 8. 12. & 13. 42, 50. 22. 13. & 24. 51. & 25. 30. *Luke* 13. 28. *Psal.* 112. 10. *Lam.* 2. 16. *Acts* 7. 54. *John* 16. 9. *Psal.* 37. 12,

of Truth has declared his Mind most expressly and plainly, we owe then no Regard to vain and empty Philosophizings in Opposition to it; and yet we fear not our Adversaries in Point of true solid and scriptural Reason. Every Sin deserves infinite Wrath, which a finite Creature is not capable to bear: It sufficeth that these *Vessels of Wrath* shall be eternally filled with so much of it as they can hold, and shall be eternally preserved, that they may eternally suffer; and seeing all their Motions and Sufferings do suit their corrupt Nature, they must be eternally mingled with Sin. Thus, Honoured Sir, I have finished what I had in View; I hope you will over-look the Weakness of the Performance. I shall not essay to Apologize, tho' these Notes were written quickly, and at some Disadvantages while providential Occurrences obliged me (much against my Inclination) to be travelling from Place to Place during most of the Time of my writing; nevertheless the Truths in themselves are great and weighty, and in treating of them I have not stated my self against any particular Adversary, nor are any concerned in what I refute, unless they have espoused the Errors. Yet such Errors are vented, whoever have given the Rise and Occasion, and it's the proper Season to offer an Antidote, while the Poison is spreading. Pardon my going beyond the ordinary Bounds of a *Missive*.

Honoured Sir,

I remain, &c.

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POST

POSTSCRIPT.

I Would have considered other Things pertaining to the new Scheme, which advanceth other Errors no less dangerous than these I have tax'd; but that I design this Essay chiefly for the Use of private Christians, and therefore did abstract from scholastical Matters, I also intended Brevity. Great and able Divines are, I hear, writing at Length. I know their excellent Performances will utterly darken mine; yet I hope the Lord of his free Mercy through Christ, will accept this small Mite; and that it shall be of Use to his little Ones, who neither can well purchase, nor have Time to read greater Works.



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